



**HAL**  
open science

## **French and German officers regarding ESDP: Same profession, different practices and representations ?**

Delphine Deschaux-Beaume

► **To cite this version:**

Delphine Deschaux-Beaume. French and German officers regarding ESDP: Same profession, different practices and representations ?. 10th EGOMAS Conference, Jun 2009, Stockholm, Sweden. hal-00396882

**HAL Id: hal-00396882**

**<https://hal.science/hal-00396882v1>**

Submitted on 19 Jun 2009

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

**French and German officers regarding ESDP:  
Same profession, different practices and representations ?**

**Delphine Deschaux-Beaume,**

PhD in political science and junior teaching and research fellow  
PACTE-Politiques, Organisations  
Sciences Po Grenoble  
[delphine.deschaux@wanadoo.fr](mailto:delphine.deschaux@wanadoo.fr)

**DRAFT : please ask the author for quotation**

Being soldier or officer does not mean today in the post-modern world the same as it did during the cold war<sup>1</sup>, an era characterised by the confrontation with the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact: military profession does no more mostly consist in preparing mechanised battles so as to be prepared to confront a clearly identified enemy militarily equivalent but implies today more and more communicative and diplomatic competences in order to be able to lead humanitarian missions, or peace-keeping missions. The 21<sup>st</sup> century soldier is all together a technical expert, a communicator and a professional closer to the world of civilians<sup>2</sup>. The European Defence and Security Policy (ESDP) illustrates emblematically this evolution of the military profession. This policy launched in 1999 at the European Intergovernmental Conference of Cologne constitutes an irruption of the military society into the European construction, which is to be considered as a true cultural revolution both for the European officers. These officers used to know only NATO as a framework for European security since the 1950's. On the contrary diplomats are by profession the classical users of the European construction since its first steps<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Post-modern means here a breakdown with the main characteristics of modernity. Cf. en particulier Charles Moskos, John A. Williams, David Segal, (eds), *The postmodern military: armed forces after the Cold War*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000 ; James Burk, Charles Moskos, *The postmodern military*, pp. 141-162, in James Burk (ed), *The military in new times: adapting armed forces to a turbulent world*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1994 et Bernard Boëne, Saïd Haddad, Thierry Nogues, *A missions nouvelles des armées, formations nouvelles des officiers des armes ?*, Paris, Centre d'Etudes en Sciences Sociales de la défense, Coll. « Les documents du C2SD », n° 46, octobre 2001 , p. 113. Ces auteurs s'appuient en particulier sur l'ouvrage de Ronald Inglehart, *La transition culturelle dans les sociétés industrielles avancées*, Paris, Economica, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Pascal Vennesson (dir.), *Politiques de défense : institutions, innovations, européanisation*, op. cit. et « Force armée et politique étrangère : soldats et diplomates aujourd'hui », p. 301-323, in Frédéric Charillon (dir.), *Politique étrangère. Nouveaux regards.*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2002 ; Bernard Boëne, Saïd Haddad, Thierry Nogues, id.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Frédéric Charillon, « Européaniser la défense : les enjeux sociologiques, politiques et intellectuels d'un projet inédit », in Dossier « L'Européanisation de la Défense », *Les Champs de Mars*, Cahiers du Centre d'Etudes en Sciences Sociales de la Défense, n°16, Deuxième semestre 2004, pp. 11-29.

Moreover the European Security and Defence Policy raises new questions for the military actors regarding the gap between what European political leaders (and mostly French and German leaders) claim the ESDP to be and the still poor material reality and the blockades encountered by this policy. Thus what does it mean to be an officer working daily at the elaboration and implementation of ESDP ? Who are these officers ? Can we identify a typical profile or professional trajectory ? Does “weapon fraternity” enable to communicate on an equal footing between officers from different nationalities ? Or on the contrary does the specificity of the military profession irradiates in Brussels according the national habitus of these officers? To put it in a nutshell : **does being an officer working at ESDP mean that all European officers share the same practices and representations of this policy ?**

To give a global answer to these questions, I used a comparative approach between French and German officers daily working at ESDP in Brussels, Paris and Berlin. I chose these two nationalities because of the strong tradition of military cooperation existing between France and Germany since the 1960's, and more intensely since the end of the Cold War. This enables me to see if the harmony claimed by French and German political leaders in terms of ESDP can be verified on the ground by the officers. The main advantage in comparing France and Germany here is to observe that in spite of a long tradition of close cooperation in defence policy and military exercises and exchanges, military profession is still much anchored in national military culture, which socializes the officers during the time of their professional formation.

On a theoretical level, I particularly rely on resources crossing profession sociology, military sociology (mostly Janowitz and Moskos; the studies conducted by Karl Haltiner or by Giuseppe Caforio are of huge interest for me here) and historical sociology (mostly inspired by Elias and Weber). These crossed sociological perspectives enable me to analyze who these officers are socially and in the frame of the military profession (question of their trajectories, of the cross checking of the ESDP networks with the French-German military cooperation networks).

My aim here is to analyse to what extent their professional ethos interacts with their national habitus in Brussels. I will try to show that this ethos plays both as a corporatist resource in their interaction with the non-military actors working with ESDP and as a constraint regarding the military actors of different nationalities. Thus I will first raise the question of the professional trajectory of the French and German officers in ESDP so as to

determine if there is –or not - an existing profile of “ESDP officer”<sup>4</sup>. Then I will analyse to what extent their national and professional socialization influences the way they construct the reality of European defence policy and give sense to this policy, both towards the civilian actors of ESDP and towards officers of other nationalities.

## **1. A typical “ESDP officer” ? Analysis of the professional profile and trajectory of the French and German officers dealing with ESDP**

### ***1.1. Using prosopography as a method***

Here the use of prosopography enables me to analyze the professional profile and the way of socialization of the actors. These two variables weigh strongly on the way these actors practice and conceive the European defence policy. There’s usually a latent will of “collective biography” underlying the use of prosopography (mostly used by historians working on antique or medieval social elites<sup>5</sup>) but my ambition is more modest here. I just try to assess if the creation of the European Security and Defence Policy (that I conceptualize as a specific social configuration in my PhD<sup>6</sup>) comes with the creation of an “ESDP profession” as for the naval profession analyzed by Norbert Elias<sup>7</sup>.

On an empirical level, my paper and conclusions are based on 52 qualitative interviews (out of 135) lead towards French and German officers in Paris, Berlin, Bonn and Brussels. I relied on a specific technique know as “snowball”, which implies to ask the officers to name on or several officers they are closely working with in the capitals and Brussels, so as to be able to map out a cartography of these actors and their connections. The first ten minutes of the interviews were dedicated to a return on the professional trajectory of the interviewed

---

<sup>4</sup> Here I raise the question also raised in the field of security and home affairs (third pillar of the European Union). See Didier Bigo, « La mondialisation de l’(in) sécurité ? Réflexion sur le champ des professionnels de la gestion des inquiétudes et analytique de la transnationalisation des processus d’ (in) sécurisation », *Cultures et Conflit* (En ligne), no 58 (2005), <http://www.conflits.org/document1813.html> , et *Une sociologie politique des processus d’eupéanisation en constitution ?*, pp. 269-276, in Antonin Cohen, Bernard Lacroix, Philippe Riutort, op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> See Mathias Bernard, « La prosopographie et l’histoire politique de la France contemporaine », in *Siècles-Cahiers du centre d’histoire des entreprises et des communautés*, 10, 1999, p. 52-54 ; Jean-Philippe Genêt, *Prosopographie et genèse de l’Etat moderne*, pp. 9-12, in Françoise Autrand (dir.), *Prosopographie et genèse de l’Etat moderne*, Actes de la table ronde organisée par le Centre national de la Recherche scientifique et l’Ecole Normale Supérieure de jeunes filles, Paris, 22-23 octobre 1984, CNRS Editions, Paris, 1986.

<sup>6</sup> See Delphine Deschaux-Beaume, *De l’Eurocorps à une armée européenne ? Pour une sociologie historique de la Politique Européenne de Sécurité et de Défense (1991-2007)*, Thèse pour le doctorat de science politique sous la direction d’Olivier Ihl, Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Grenoble, 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Norbert Elias, « Etudes sur la genèse de la profession de marin », 1950, translated and published in *Les Champs de Mars*, n°13, premier semestre 2003, pp. 5-33.

actor, so as to assess the impact of the professional and national socializing processes on their practices and representations of ESDP.

Thus comes the question: *can we reveal the predominance of a typical profile, which would provide an explanation for the practices and representations of ESDP by these officers?*

### ***1.2. Some major characteristics, which cannot however lead to deduce an emerging “ESDP profession”***

The main characteristics that I am going to draw don't seem to transcend the national and organisational habitus previously acquired by the actors through their professional carrier according to my findings.

#### **1.2.1. A socio-demographic homogeneity**

The group formed by the French and German officers dealing daily with ESDP presents a great homogeneity in social terms: they are all men aged between 45 and 50 years old. Concerning their belonging to a specific army (Navy, Air Force, and Army), the apportionment of the panel of my interviewees echoes the global apportionment of the armed forces between the three elements: the army being the most numerous element in both countries, it is mechanically the most represented in the positions dealing with the elaboration and implementation of ESDP. But there is still a rotation between the three elements, which is ruled by the national military human resources organs.

Concerning the rank of these officers, they belong to the social military category which can be designed as elite (the leading fraction of the armed forces)<sup>8</sup>. These officers are mostly colonels (or commander or frigate captains in the navy) and generals in the capitals and in Brussels. Both on the French and German side there is an important stake by putting officers known to be talented (and politically aware) in the positions dealing with ESDP, so as to make sure to promote cleverly the national interests through this policy. Thus the expert positions are frequently held by colonels who have already hold positions related to military cooperation in Europe, whereas the more “political” positions as Military Representative in Brussels or Head of the ESDP military organs (EU Military Committee, EU Military Staff)

---

<sup>8</sup> François Cailleteau, *Quelles élites militaires ?*, pp. 61-80, in Gérard Varenne (dir.), *Les armées en question*, Paris, Economica, 2005.

are preferably given to officers known as “high potentials” by their national military staffs. This strategy is particularly striking on the French side: the French Ministry of Defence plays its “big cards” in Brussels: the examples of the General Bentégeat (Head of the EUMC), the General Vichon (formerly in position in the Delegation of Strategic Affairs, then military representative in Washington) or the Admiral Tifou (formerly in position in the Delegation of Strategic Affairs, then military representative in London) illustrate particularly this deliberate strategy.

On the German side however there is another discriminating element : having been in a politico-military position in one of the NATO headquarters. The Bundeswehr has actually been constructed in the very frame of the Atlantic Alliance, which explains why the best German officers are still mostly in position in the commanding NATO structures : NATO stays a fundamental step in a military career in Germany more than ESDP even if the younger generations of German officers tend to grow up with this new frame too.

### **1.2.2. An equivalent level of military education**

All the officers of my panel hold a higher degree of interarmed military education at the *Collège Interarmées de Défense* in Paris (CID) or the *Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr* (FüAk) in Hamburg and even both French and German military institutions for 44,2 % of the interviewees. These higher education institutions can become integrated only if the officer already has a very good standard of initial military education<sup>9</sup>.

This raises the question of a potential French-German network as a professional resource in ESDP.

### **1.2.3. A “French-German network” as professional resource?**

Here the answer to this question must be balanced. The number of officers specialized both in ESDP and French-German cooperation is of course limited: these officers tend to evolve from position to position in the frame of the network : “There are always the same persons who orbit in the network French-German military cooperation-ESDP-NATO.”<sup>10</sup> And yet if in my panel the belonging of the officers to both French-German and ESDP networks

---

<sup>9</sup> Interviews at the CID, Paris, 9/06/2005 and 29/06/2005, and at the FüAk, Hambourg, 29/02/2007.

<sup>10</sup> Interview at the Ministry of Defence, Paris, 9/01/2007.

seems most obvious in the capitals, the reality is different in Brussels: less than half the interviews there had a French-German professional background.

What can be said to sum up is that the ideal profile of an officer daily working at elaborating and implementing ESDP is to be discovered *a posteriori*. But still the social group of French and German officers in those positions is characterised by a strong social and professional homogeneity<sup>11</sup> and some major features: youth, strong cultural capital and a very coherent and oriented military career. Once I underlined these features, I can raised the striking question that really concerns me: according to these professional trajectories and socializing processes, **what are the professional and organisational resources that these officers have at their disposal in making ESDP work and how do they invest these resources ?**

## **2. French and German officers in ESDP: an elusive balance between “weapon fraternity” and a resilient national habitus**

The European Defence Policy raises new sociological question still largely unexplored, such as the question of the resources linked to the professional corporations that this policy brings together both in Brussels and the capitals (her Paris and Berlin). There I will analyze to what extent the professional ethos (or “weapon fraternity”) of the French and German officers intersects their national habitus in Brussels and constitutes both a resource towards the civilian actors –and mostly diplomats with whom they share the production of national foreign policy-, and a constraint towards the other military actors of different nationalities (national military culture remains a major reference).

### ***2.1. Military profession as resource towards the diplomats***

Officers working in the framework of ESDP tend to depict their environment through the specific military vocabulary: the military language has an effect of social fence around the group. Through this language, they tend to focus their attention on the technical and operational aspects rather than on the political issues. But with the development of ESDP a

---

<sup>11</sup> My field enquiry actually echoes the enquiry lead by the French ministry of Defence in 2001 on the new officers : Luc Jacob-Duvernet et alii, *Révolution aux armées ? Les nouveaux officiers*, Les Cahiers de Générations, n°8, Paris, Ministère de la Défense, 2001.

new kind of mission opens up for the officers at the junction between military profession and diplomacy.

Daily multinationality implies new cultural and intercultural competences. Thus being commissioned to a European position has become a real stake for the member states and the human resource services of the national armies: the stake is political for the member states and more professional for the officers even though the military cultures and even the weapon cultures stay very rooted in the officers' representations and practices. Eventually the question has to be raised: does an army officer feel closer to a marine officer of the same nationality than to an army officer of a different nationality? Can one see the beginning of an Europeanization of the military cultures or does on the contrary ESDP tend to reinforce the national differences and generate a cultural withdrawal?

Military elites both in France and Germany actually weigh not so much and mostly occasionally on the decision-making systems of both states regarding foreign and security policy. ESDP could then present for them an opportunity for getting back influence on the European scene and through this, on the national scene. This possibility is more likely than there is no American leadership in ESDP as it exists in NATO. And the French-German founding myth (French-German friendship as the cornerstone for the European adventure) provides a strong and legitimate working base for the officers of both countries.

According to my enquiry being socialized to the military profession appears in the case of ESDP as a professional resource vis-à-vis the diplomats also daily working in ESDP. The operational issues lead to the practice of the same kind of technical NATO standardized language by the officers: when a French officer talks about a tank to a German officer for instance, the German officer understands right away that the French officer is talking about a French tank<sup>12</sup>. Thus although military cultures stay fundamentally different, they all have in common a technical language, which provides a basis enabling multinationality. The exchanges during the initial military training also play a crucial role here: they are to be intensified between France and Germany, which will help the understanding between both armies. These professional exchanges are much less frequent for the diplomats during their training.

---

<sup>12</sup> Actually the functioning of the armed forces implies a strong cohesion between the soldiers, a friendship to face the threats, so as to provide an efficient army to be easily commanded: « It is vital that soldiers know each other if they are to cohere under the pressure of combat. Soldiers must be able to trust their colleagues, knowing how they will conduct themselves under fire. » Anthony King, « The word of command. Communication and cohesion in the military », in *Armed forces and society*, 32 (4), July 2006, p. 494.



More concretely: “Diplomats are in charge of holding the French political red line, whereas officers experiment ESDP on the ground. [...] There’s mostly a difference of constraints rooted in the difference of profession.”<sup>13</sup> Above the different national military cultures, the socializing processes to a same profession enables the French and German officers of ESDP to understand themselves sometimes better than with the diplomats of their own nationality, and even try to instrumentalize ESDP for their professional benefit : for instance, the German Marine uses the European demand for a Marine Battle Group since 2006 to justify its growing financial requests before the Federal Government and the Defence Ministry in Berlin.

ESDP also represents a new kind of work –almost a new profession- for these officers: they daily deal with jurists, economist, NGOs, lobbyists...and work into a vast civil-military configuration. Military profession in ESDP stands at the crossroads of army and diplomacy. More precisely the officers provide their expertise as defence professionals : they are in charge of lots of issues as European military capabilities, military operations, crisis situations, arm procurement... Thus the technicity required for the management of these issues constitutes a specific resource for them and plays at the same time as a fence regarding the diplomatic actors who often do not master this technical language and its codes. The officers of ESDP are actually placed in a competitive position in Brussels towards the diplomats to the extent that they incarnate relay “diplomacy of defence” characterised by the major political decision-making process in the EU: ongoing negotiation. The officers into position in the three ESDP organs in Brussels and also in the capitals are a crucial link between the EU and the member states: they work “in grey” as they say themselves, which means that their daily work mixes technical expertise and political analysis, as the diplomats do. They become “communicating soldiers”<sup>14</sup>. The most explicit sign for the ongoing competition between the military and civil-diplomatic actors in ESDP is the lack of a European Council for the Defence ministers as it already exists for the ministers of Foreign Affairs (the GAERC): this option has been turned down by the Foreign Affairs in 2000 and hasn’t been rediscussed positively yet. Of course it is important to say that this “diplomacy of defence” is quite different from the traditional way of exercising the diplomatic activity (diplomats are socialized to be in charge of the representation of national interests as a key aspect of their profession).

---

<sup>13</sup> Interview at the military staff, Ministère de la Défense, Paris, 22.01.2007.

<sup>14</sup> See Joseph Soeters, *Valeurs militaires, valeurs civiles : vers le soldat-communicateur ?*, pp. 271-286, in Bernard Boëne, Christopher Dandeker, *Les armées en Europe*, Paris, La Découverte, Coll. « Recherche », 1998.

Is this to say that the institutional socialising processes operating in Brussels and in the capitals for the officers daily in charge of ESDP is about to overcome their national military habitus ? Do French and German officers practice and conceptualize ESDP alike on the basis of a shared professional ethos ? My enquiry conduces to conclude differently.

## ***2.2. National habitus as the cornerstone of the practices and representations of ESDP for the French and German officers***

The army and the belonging to its institution are seen quite differently in France and in Germany. Choosing the military career is conceived as much more than just a job in France: it is a life choice, implying specific values. In Germany on the other hand the interviewed officers massively adhere to the idea of the army as a profession as any other profession.

### **2.2.1. A diverging perception of the army as institution**

To convey Janowitz's distinction between institutional army and industrial army, the Bundeswehr corresponds more to the industrial model where the army is seen as a kind of public service and a trivialized profession whereas the French model is more institutional and relies on a specific value community which give the soldier a particular status in society. The first referent for these officers remains national and organisational<sup>15</sup> : the solidarity between officers in Brussels is much more a uniform solidarity towards the civil-diplomatic actors than a real Europeanization of the military cultures and habitus. The former experience of the actors in the national bureaucracies, whether they are civilian or military, French or German, conduced them to internalize the norms and practices linked to their precedent position and to reassess them in their new organisational context<sup>16</sup>. Moreover the turn over is

---

<sup>15</sup> See Christophe Pajon, « L'Europe de la défense et la transformation des identités militaires : quelle européanisation ? Le cas des acteurs militaires britannique, allemand et français », *Politique Européenne*, 10, 2003, pp. 148-171 et Niagalé Bagayoko, op. cit. C'est d'ailleurs le cas de nombre d'autres fonctionnaires nationaux détachés à Bruxelles : cf. Morten Egeberg, « Transcending intergovernmentalism ? Identity and role-perceptions of national officials in EU decision-making », in *Journal of European Public Policy*, 6 (3), 1999, pp. 456-474, et Anne Stevens, *Les hauts fonctionnaires de l'Union Européenne : uniformité statutaire et diversité culturelle*, pp. 9-27, in Françoise Dreyfus, Jean-Michel Eymeri, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> Liesbet Hooghe also observed this process in her study about the high civil servants of the European Commission. See Liesbet Hooghe, « Consociationalists or Weberians ? Top Commission Officials on Nationality », in *Governance*, 12(4), 1999, p. 412.

quite high is the positions linked to ESDP: 2-3 years maximum, which is not enough to completely alternate the actor's own habitus.

### **2.2.2. The major impact of national security cultures**

However, the national security cultures have a major impact on the officers' representations<sup>17</sup>. My enquiry puts face to face German officers still very NATO-oriented and French officers at ease with ESDP.

Even if the German officers start to see career opportunities in European Defence Policy, they go on keeping a strong orientation towards NATO compared to their French colleagues. This element is very understandable considering the fact that the Bundeswehr has been constructed in the framework of NATO in 1955-56. One of the arguments most developed by German officers is following: NATO has been working efficiently since over fifty years and has developed a strong operational experience of multilateral military action. The Atlantic socialization remains a major characteristic for the Bundeswehr officers even if the youngest generation also grows in a context in which ESDP is developing quite quickly.

On the contrary the issues are different for the French officers. French withdrawal from NATO military structures in 1966 offers a restricted number of positions for French officers in the NATO command structures (even if this number should increase to some hundreds after the return of France in NATO's military integrated commands in spring 2009). Thus being into position in the European Union impulses in a way a cumulative career movement for the French officers: seeing that they can hold down interesting positions in Brussels in the framework of ESDP, French officers are also more eager to support the development of this European policy than their German or British colleagues can be<sup>18</sup>.

Another factor also explains the diverging practices and representations around ESDP between French and German officers: the non exclusively military dimension of ESDP in spite of the functioning of NATO where the language is a strictly military and codified language.

---

<sup>17</sup> See Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The culture of national security. Norms and identity in world politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996.

<sup>18</sup> This element contrasts with the situation in the beginning of the 1990's : a quantitative survey conducted by the sociologist Karl Haltiner shows that French officers were up to 16% euro-progressists, to 35 % euroscepticists and to 49% national-conservatives against respectively 39%, 22% et 39% for the German officers in 1994. Cf. Karl Haltiner, « Is there a common European Defence Identity ? The views of officers of eight European countries », in *Current Sociology*, 42 (3), 1994, pp. 71-85.

### **2.2.3. The challenge of ESDP for its officers: a “grey” job, at the crossroads of defence and politics**

Working in ESDP is a politico-military job, which is sometimes perceived as confusing for the officers: they themselves talk about a work “in grey” (that means nor all white, nor all black). This “grey work” is mostly perceived as motivating by the French officers and more insecure by the German officers according to the interviews lead in Paris, Berlin, Bonn and Brussels. Thus behind the same lexical field the difference of representations around ESDP show through when one comes to questions such as the EU-NATO relations, the mandate of ESDP organs in Brussels or the EU military operations such as the EUFOR Congo launched in Spring 2006 for instance.

Schematically ESDP as the French officers conceive it<sup>19</sup> would constitute a way of counterbalancing American unilateralism in the international relations and generating a European leadership centre in security and defence matters. The issue is not to compete with NATO but to consolidate a European security pole able to speak consensually and intervene where NATO as a whole is not perceived as competent (or where the American interests don't encourage the USA to act). That's actually why the French pushed hard the idea of an operation centre in Brussels within the EU military staff : this centre exists today as a nucleus formed from the civil-military cell created in 2005.

On the other hand ESDP as it is perceived by German officers seems more a means for Germany to be able to assume its responsibilities in terms of international security but with the constant preoccupation of staying in order with NATO: this preoccupation figures in every German official document concerning this question as for instance the Defence White Paper of 2006, which uses the term *vernetzte Sicherheit* (embedded security) so as to make sure that security can only be performed by a collegial functioning between the EU, NATO and the UN. For the interviewed German officers, enforcing ESDP would enable the Europeans to become attractive for the Americans and to show them that we are reliable allies who don't restrict to a rhetorical level. Therefore the Germans tended to advocate the Berlin Plus functioning for the first military operations in Bosnia and Macedonia much more easily than the French. This difference of representations of ESDP of course influences these officers

---

<sup>19</sup> I of course rely on my 135 interviews lead in Brussels and the capitals with officers and diplomats, (among which 5 interviews with British officers so as to get an external view on my topic). I don't pretend to generalize my observations to the whole officers and diplomats corpus of France and Germany. My findings are valid in the specific framework of my field enquiry, lead by my analytical research design, and completed by specialized literature on this topic.

practices: for instance, the French tended until recently to stay in an obstructive position in the political official NATO meetings arguing that they feared a “reversed Berlin Plus” (this means the possibility for NATO to use EU’s capabilities –mostly the financial tools of the Commission-for NATO operations).

### *Concluding remarks*

As I tried to show it in this paper, European Defense Policy (ESDP) hinges not only on new demands for the military profession after the Cold War –and in particular with professionalization- but also with the national habitus and military cultures of the officers daily working at this policy’s elaboration and implementation. ESDP generates an evolution of the profession of these officers towards a grey zone between defense and diplomacy. However their national and professional socialization remains a key reference for them, which enables to explain why French and German officers develop diverging practices and representations around this specific policy. There does not seem to be a European resocialization at the moment: the time spent into position in Brussels is too short to impulse a real alternation (in the sense of Berger and Luckmann<sup>20</sup>). And yet if no top-down European socialization has emerged for the moment, the EU military civil-military operations appear today as a vehicle for a potential bottom-up marginal socialization of the European soldiers on the ground, in the ordeal by fire as it already works for the Blue Helmets for instance or for NATO operations. These EU operations grow in number since 2003 and combine both military and civil aspects. They constitute a legitimating basis for ESDP and a possible way of vertical socialization for the European officers much more than the ESDP bureaucratic organs in Brussels<sup>21</sup>. It is precisely in this vertical process that the French-German military cooperation can show its added-value based on the multinational experience of French and German soldiers coming from bi- or multinational military units such as the French-German Brigade or the Eurocorps.

---

<sup>20</sup> See Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, *La construction sociale de la réalité*, Paris, Méridiens Klincksieck, 1986.

<sup>21</sup> Sven Gareis distinguishes two types of mechanisms in multinationality : horizontal military cooperation and vertical military cooperation. Horizontal military cooperation consists in juxtaposing national units without interactions on the troop level : multinationality is confined to the highest command levels, as it is in the Eurocorps. Vertical military cooperation consists on the contrary in a strong integration, a mixed chain of command (which means that the officer has an officer of another nationality above him) and a mixity of the troop, as it is in the French-German Brigade. See Sven Bernhard Gareis, *Militärische Multinationalität*, pp. 157-175 in Nina Leonhard, Ines-Jacqueline Werkner, *Militärische Soziologie. Eine Einführung*, VS Verlag, 2005 and *Multinationalität als europäische Herausforderung*, pp. 332-341, in Sven Gareis, Paul Klein (Hrsg), *Handbuch Militär und Sozialwissenschaft*, Wiesbaden, VS Verlag, 2004.